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Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services

Plenary of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
Sixth session
Medellín, Colombia, 18–24 March 2018
Item 5 of the provisional agenda*

Report of the Executive Secretary on the implementation of the first work programme for the period 2014–2018

Information on collaboration and partnerships

Note by the secretariat

1. In decision IPBES-2/8, the Plenary of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) approved the collaborative partnership arrangement to establish an institutional link between the Plenary and the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the United Nations Development Programme set out in the annex to the decision.

2. In decision IPBES-3/4, the Plenary approved the guidance on the development of partnerships and other collaborative arrangements, set out in annex III to the decision, containing a list of means by which strategic partnerships were expected to support the implementation of the IPBES work programme, criteria to be used in identifying whether a strategic partnership was appropriate and necessary, and a list of actions that could be undertaken without entering into more formal partnership agreements.

3. In section III of decision IPBES-4/4, the Plenary, recognizing the importance of stakeholder engagement and strategic partnerships for the success of IPBES in seeking to strengthen the science-policy interface, requested the Executive Secretary to finalize memoranda of cooperation between the secretariats of the individual multilateral environmental agreements related to biodiversity and ecosystem services and the secretariat of IPBES, and to report to the Plenary at its fifth session and regularly thereafter on outreach and collaboration with other relevant international bodies.

4. In section II of decision IPBES-5/1, the Plenary requested the task force on capacity-building to further enhance collaboration transparently with other organizations in the implementation of the capacity-building rolling plan and requested the Bureau, in collaboration with the task force, to consider what would be the most effective way of leveraging additional support for capacity-building. In section III of the decision, the Plenary encouraged the task force on knowledge and data to develop terms of reference to specify the modalities of its collaboration on specific tasks with partner organizations.

5. The annex to the present note, which is presented without formal editing, sets out a report on further progress made in various types of collaboration and partnerships, as well as information on developments intended to further strengthen engagement with partner organizations.

* IPBES/6/1

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Annex

Report on ongoing and new partnerships

1. The following sections set out information on progress regarding new and ongoing partnerships, and a plan to actively seek new partners.

A. Collaboration with United Nation partners

2. In its decision IPBES-2/8, the Plenary approved the collaborative partnership arrangement to establish an institutional link between the Plenary of IPBES and United Nations Environment (UN Environment), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

3. As set out in the annex to the decision, this core partnership arrangement provides a framework for collaboration under which, inter alia, the Partners establish an institutional link between the Platform and the Organizations whereby the UN partners coordinate relevant activities and cooperate in areas related to the functions of the Platform, make available dedicated capacity and secondments to support the secretariat, provide technical and programmatic support to the implementation of the work programme, undertake joint fundraising and communication activities.

4. The UN partners have continued to support IPBES in various ways since the fifth session of the Plenary. A progress report on the United Nation Collaborative Partnership Arrangement is set out in background document IPBES/6/INF/24.

B. Collaboration with multilateral environmental agreements related to biodiversity and ecosystem services

5. In March 2017, memoranda of cooperation were concluded with the secretariats of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora and the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar Convention). Earlier, a memorandum of cooperation had been concluded with the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity. All memoranda of cooperation are available on the IPBES website at www.ipbes.net/document-library-categories/agreements.

6. The secretariat has closely collaborated with the secretariats of these conventions regarding the distribution of calls and notifications to their national focal points and networks, for example regarding the review of draft assessments.

7. The Ramsar Convention has launched a policy brief "Integrating multiple wetland values into decision-making" based on the IPBES guide to diverse conceptualizations of the value of nature (available at www.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/documents/library/rpb_values_of_wetlands_e.pdf).

8. The Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, at its twelfth meeting held in Manila, the Philippines from 23 to 28 October 2017, requested the Scientific Council of the convention, in decision 12.13, subject to available funds, to undertake a review of needs and opportunities for improving the interface between science and policy in relation to the conservation and sustainable use of migratory species. This should include the use of scientific assessments, and consider the potential role of migratory species as indicators of wider ecological change and the results should be communicated to IPBES.

9. The secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity organized a workshop on 29 and 30 November 2017, back-to-back with the IPBES workshop on the identification of gaps in knowledge and draft research priorities emerging from the pollination assessment (27-29 November 2017, Reading, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland), to progress on related mandates contained in decision XIII/15 on the implications of the IPBES Assessment Report on Pollinators, Pollination and Food Production for the work of the Convention.

10. The Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice of the Convention on Biological Diversity, at its 21st meeting, held from 11 to 14 December 2017 in Montreal, Canada, adopted a number of recommendations linked to the work of IPBES, including

(a) Recommendation XXI/1: Scenarios for the 2050 vision for biodiversity, in which the subsidiary body, among other things, recommended to the Subsidiary Body on Implementation of the convention to take the work of the IPBES expert group on scenarios and models developing a new set of multi-scale biodiversity scenarios through a stakeholder-driven process into account in its

consideration of the agenda item on the preparation for the follow-up to the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020. The subsidiary body also recommended to the Conference of the Parties to the convention a set of conclusions regarding scenarios for the 2050 vision for biodiversity;

(b) Recommendation XXI/2: Sustainable wildlife management: guidance for a sustainable wild meat sector, in which the subsidiary body recommended to the Conference of the Parties voluntary guidance for a sustainable wild meat sector, and, among other things, requested the Executive Secretary of the convention to communicate to IPBES the priority that the subsidiary body gives to the thematic assessment of the sustainable use of wild species and to communicate with the Executive Secretary of IPBES with a view to facilitating the wide dissemination of the outcomes of the assessment of the sustainable use of wild species in order to help strengthen capacities and tools;

(c) Recommendation XXI/3: Health and biodiversity, in which the subsidiary body recommended to the Conference of the Parties a decision on the topic, and noted that it may consider, at its 22nd meeting, possible suggestions for the second work programme of IPBES and in this context, may wish to consider the topic of biodiversity and health;

(d) Recommendation XXI/5: Fifth edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook: considerations for its preparation, in which the subsidiary body recommended to the Conference of the Parties a decision which would highlight that the global and regional assessments of biodiversity and ecosystem services and the thematic assessments carried out by IPBES, as well as other relevant national and subregional assessments, form an important evidence base for the assessment of progress towards the achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets in the fifth edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook, and in which the Conference of the Parties would request the Executive Secretary of the convention to continue collaborating with IPBES, among others, in the preparation and review of the fifth edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook, as appropriate.

11. The Executive Secretary of IPBES and the global assessment team of the secretariat participated in the 21st meeting of the subsidiary body. A side event, presenting work undertaken on the global assessment and on scenarios and models, was organised 12 December 2017.

12. The secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity collaborated with the IPBES secretariat in organizing the Global Dialogue with Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities on the IPBES Global Assessment of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services on 9 December 2017, in the margins of the tenth meeting of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Article 8(j) and Related Provisions of the CBD (for further information on the event see document IPBES/5/2 and background document IPBES/5/INF/11 on the global assessment).

13. The 22nd meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice of the Convention on Biological Diversity will be held from 2-7 July 2018 in Montreal, Canada. At this meeting, the subsidiary body is expected to consider, under item 6 (updated scientific assessment of progress towards selected Aichi Biodiversity Targets and options to accelerate progress) information arising from the regional assessments of biodiversity and ecosystem services and the assessment of land degradation and restoration of IPBES and their implications for the work of the convention. Under item 11, conservation and sustainable use of pollinators, the subsidiary body is expected to consider work undertaken in follow-up to decision XIII/15, which provided policy guidance on pollinators, pollination and food production based on the IPBES assessment. Under item 12, second work programme of IPBES, the subsidiary body is expected to consider an annotated compilation of possible requests, prepared by the Executive Secretary of the convention, drawing on inputs from Parties and partners, and taking into account guidance for requests and any initial draft elements for the work programme prepared by IPBES.

14. The thirteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification was held from 6 to 9 September 2017 in Ordos, China. The Executive Secretary of IPBES attended the meeting together with the co-chairs and technical support unit of the IPBES assessment of land degradation and restoration. The Executive Secretary and a co-chair of the assessment presented progress in the preparation of the assessment to the Committee on Science and Technology, and held a successful side event. The Conference of the Parties to the convention adopted a work programme for the Science-Policy Interface of the convention for 2018-19, with the mandates to:

(a) Review the land degradation and restoration assessment and analyse its key messages relevant for the convention for presentation at the fourteenth session of the Committee on Science and Technology;

(b) Review the key messages of the IPBES Global Assessment relevant for the convention regarding options to protect and use biodiversity and ecosystems, as well as the benefits they provide for people, for presentation at the.

15. The session of the Committee on Science and Technology will be held the week before the 14th session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in 2019, and prepare decisions for adoption by the Conference of the Parties.

C. Collaboration with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

16. At its 46th session, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change granted observer status to IPBES. Efforts are also ongoing to strengthen collaboration with the secretariat of the Panel.

D. Collaboration with other strategic partners

17. In support of key areas of work IPBES has established a number of memoranda of understanding with strategic partners.

18. Already in 2016, a memorandum was finalized and signed with IUCN covering the main areas overarching of the work programme, including data and knowledge, capacity building and stakeholder engagement.

19. In 2017, memoranda were established with a number of other strategic partners in support of the various areas of work, including:

(a) A memorandum with Future Earth, concluded in March 2017, addressing support, inter alia, to IPBES work on assessments, on knowledge generation, and stakeholder engagement; and

(b) A memorandum with the United Nations University Institute of Advanced Studies (UNU-IAS), concluded in July 2017, addressing support, inter alia, to IPBES work on capacity building, indigenous and local knowledge, and policy support tools.

20. With regard to collaboration with partners in support of IPBES work on knowledge and data, memoranda with the following organisations are being developed, with some of them planned to be signed in the margins of the sixth session of the IPBES Plenary:

(a) Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF);

(b) The Group on Earth Observations - Biodiversity Observation Network (GEO BON);

(c) The Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research (IAI).

21. In addition, IPBES is collaborating with other partners, who support various aspects of the work programme including on:

(a) Capacity building providing support to the task force on capacity building and undertaking themselves capacity building activities in support of IPBES objectives (see also IPBES/6/INF/12);

(b) Indigenous and local knowledge providing support to the task force on indigenous and local knowledge as well as to the mobilisation of indigenous and local knowledge in the context of the global assessment (see also IPBES/6/INF/13);

(c) IPBES indicators providing support to IPBES by making available fact sheets for the various indicators, supplying related data and collaborating with the task group on the preparation of visualizations (see also IPBES/6/INF/14); and

(d) The catalogue of policy support tools providing support to the expert group further developing the online catalogue (see also IPBES/6/INF/16).

E. Further work on partnerships

22. Further work on partnerships, guided by the results of the internal review, will focus on 1) increasing the visibility of the contributions of existing partners to IPBES, and on 2) building new partnerships.

23. Increasing the visibility of existing partnerships: Efforts will be undertaken to more appropriately recognize and publicise the contributions made by existing partners as a function of their level of engagement.

24. Acknowledging partners could include, as appropriate, partners:

(a) Having a dedicated community on the IPBES website, including a landing page, closed membership, private discussion boards and file/resource storage.

(b) Being featured on the partnerships page of the IPBES website, with their logo, brief description and link to their own website and/or social media channels.

(c) Using a IPBES partner logo (to be created as a derivative of the primary IPBES logo) and related text on their own publications, outreach/communications materials, website/s, social media channels, etc.

(d) Nominating a representative to serve on the project team which coordinates the annual stakeholder day/s ahead of IPBES Plenary sessions and having the opportunity to present their activities in support of IPBES at these stakeholder meetings.

(e) Being a member of the "IPBES Partners" public list on the IPBES twitter feed and being 'featured' on the IPBES YouTube channel.

25. Building new partnerships: IPBES will intensify its efforts to engage with a broader range of partners. In order to do so, IPBES will launch calls for specific contributions and engage with interested partners, guided and monitored by expert groups or task forces. In the remaining period of the first work programme, this approach to actively seek new partners, based on calls to the community, will be piloted in the context of the work on capacity building and on indigenous and local knowledge.

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Item 5 of the provisional agenda*

Report of the Executive Secretary on the implementation of the first work programme for the period 2014–2018

Implementation of the conflict of interest policy for the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services

Note by the secretariat

By its decision IPBES-3/3, on procedures for the preparation of Platform deliverables, the Plenary of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services adopted the conflict of interest policy and implementation procedures set out in annex II to that decision. The annex to the present note, which is presented without formal editing, provides information on the progress made in implementing the policy, and a report to the Plenary by the Committee on Conflicts of Interest on its activities, which the Committee submitted in accordance with rule 10 of the implementation procedures.

* IPBES/6/1

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Annex

Composition of the Committee on Conflicts of Interest

1. A Committee on Conflicts of Interest was established in 2015, following the third session of the Plenary, in accordance with rule 10 of the conflict-of-interest policy and implementation procedures. Following election of the new Bureau at the fourth session of the Plenary, Robert Watson (Chair, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland) and Leonel Sierralta (Chile) stepped down from the Committee, and Alfred Oteng-Yeboah (Ghana, Bureau vice-chair for African Group) became chair of the Committee. Following the departure of Kevin Joseph Cash, from Canada, from the Committee, after the fifth session, a call was issued to IPBES members on 11 January 2018 for candidates from the Western Europe and Others Group, with a deadline of 2 February 2018, and one nomination received for Jean-François Silvain, from France, who was selected by the Bureau.

2. The Committee is composed of the following 9 members:

(a) 3 Bureau members:

Alfred Oteng-Yeboah (Ghana), Chair

Diego Pacheco (Plurinational State of Bolivia)

Rashad Allahverdiyev (Azerbaijan)

(b) 5 members, one per UN region:

Helena Nader (Brazil)

Jean-François Silvain (France)

Haigen Xu (China)

Kaouthar Tliche Aloui (Tunisia)

Nilay (Çabuk) Kaya (Turkey)

(c) 1 legal counsel:

Maria Socorro Manguiat, Head of National Environmental Law Unit, Law Division, UNEP, is serving as the "additional member with appropriate legal expertise from, and appointed by the organization hosting the secretariat" (rule 10).

Actions taken

3. All relevant individuals were invited by the secretariat to submit disclosure forms electronically through an online form (appendix to annex II to decision IPBES-3/3).

4. The secretariat compiled all responses received and submitted to Committee members a summary spreadsheet of all submissions asking whether any conflict was identified.

5. Experts were required to submit a disclosure form for each deliverable they were involved in, in situations where they contributed to several deliverables.

6. The Committee reviewed the compiled information, which on 9 February 2018 corresponded to 94% of the expected disclosure forms. No teleconference was organised because no conflict was signalled either by an expert, or by a member of the Committee.

7. The secretariat will actively seek to receive the remainder of the forms.

8. The Committee sent to the secretariat the letter set out in the appendix below for submission to the Plenary. The letter constitutes the Committee's report on its activities and is being submitted to the Plenary for information, pursuant to rule 10, paragraph 5, of the conflict of interest policy, according to which the Committee will submit a report on its activities to the Plenary at least four weeks prior to each session of the Plenary.

Appendix

Report of the Committee on Conflicts of Interest to the Plenary on its activities

Dear Governments and Observers

The Conflicts of interest Committee has reviewed all conflict of interest forms submitted to date (9 February, 2018), since the fifth session of the Plenary, amounting to 67 forms, and bringing the total number of forms reviewed since the establishment of the Committee to 1132.

When examining an individual's conflict of interest (COI) form, the Committee spent considerable time differentiating between "biases" and "conflict of interest". The IPBES Plenary (Annex II of Decision IPBES-3/3) defined a conflict of interest as any current interest of an individual that could either: (i) significantly impair the individual's objectivity in carrying out his or her duties and responsibilities for the Platform, or (ii) create an unfair advantage for any person or organization. Whereas bias, as defined in the IPBES policy on COI, refers to a point of view or perspective that is strongly held by an individual regarding a particular issue or set of issues.

The strength of IPBES is to ensure that the experts involved in preparing the assessment reports (co-chairs, coordinating lead authors, lead authors and review editors) represent a wide range of experiences, views and perspectives. The Committee recognized that all experts, whether from academia, government, private sector or NGOs, have biases. This is part of human nature. As noted in the COI policy, bias is managed through the selection of experts with a balance of perspectives, and through the peer review process.

The Committee reviewed all new forms since the fifth session and noted that none had signalled a conflict of interest.

The Committee did not find any conflicts of interests as defined in annex II of decision IPBES-3/3.

The Committee noted that as 9 February, 2018 the secretariat was missing 40 forms from experts and 25 from Multidisciplinary Expert Panel nominees. Given the fact that the conflict of interest policy requires senior leadership of the Platform and authors with responsibility for report content to submit such a form, the Committee exhorts the secretariat to remind all relevant experts that a condition for being involved in an IPBES activity is compliance with the conflict of interest policy.

Alfred Oteng-Yeboah

Chair of the Committee on Conflict of Interest

On behalf of the Committee